RASA BOXES PD NOTES: PRESENTATION LINK

History of Rasa Boxes:

The Rasa Boxes exercises seek to train actors -- to treat each emotion as an ingredient to be fully taken in by the actor, so that its flavor can be tasted and digested by the audience.

The actor-training technique was adapted from a theory of emotion detailed in an ancient Sanskrit manual on performance (circa sixth century BCE to second century CE*) called the Natyasatra. Rasa, from the Sanskrit language, literally means flavor, essence, or "juice." It also refers to specific "emotional flavors" or states that are shared between performers and audience.

Activity to discuss the meaning of Rasa:

[ORANGE]

1. Passed out an orange to examine sight, smell, sound, touch, taste.
   Rasa is the experience of the orange (the orange gives you) it is the change it makes in you, the room, or in existence.
2. Everyone was allowed to speak their response freely.
3. Everyone can eat the orange as instructor explains what rasa is: "juice"

Meaning of the Rasas:

There are eight primary rasa states: sringara (desire, love) hasya (humor, joy) karuna (pity, grief, sadness) raudra (anger, rage) vira (courage, energy) bhayanaka (fear, shame) bibhatsa (disgust) adbhuta (wonder, amazement) A ninth rasa, shanta (peace, calmness), was later added to the Natyasastra's system of primary rasas. These emotional states, and the way in which they mix and coexist, underlie all behavior.

GETTING STARTED & CENTERED Tao (dow) breaths:

1. Breathe in the nose; deep,
   Breathe out mouth/ relax knees,
2. Breathe in the nose; deep,
   Breathe out mouth (Whooooo sound)
3. Breathe in the nose; deep,
   Breathe out (Haaaaa sound)
4. Breathe in; arms up,
   Breathe out; collapse over, swing arms; shwoo, shwwoo,
5. Come up; breathe in, arms out and up
   Breathe out; push down with arms and knees
6. Breathe in; stand up
   Breathe out; knees relaxed

(repeat 2 more times)

Remember this is a relaxed breath, do not fix hair or clothing when working these breathe until the instructor releases you.

Created Rasaboxes out of masking tape in the acting space.

Write the 9 rasas with chalk or place signs with each rasa labeled. The order doesn't necessarily matter but it helps to place them in a progressive order.

Hasya Laughter /Humor	Raudra Anger	Bibhasta Disgust
Bhayanaka Fear/ Shame		Adbhuta Surprise/Wonder
Sringara Desire/ Love	Karuna Pitty/ Grief	Vira Energy/ Vigor/ Heroism

ACTIVITIES:

RASA BRAINSTORM & GALLERY WALK:

Sit papers on the ground and provide color markers, pencils and whatever other writing material you want) and have students work alone or in teams, circulating amongst the rasas and writing, drawing, or sketching any association they might have with that particular rasa. The key here is it is about their associations, not the teacher, so explain very little. After the students have had this exploration, allow them to do a "gallery" walk, where you all walk around and see each other's work.

PASS THE FACE:

Sit in a circle. One student entered the rasas and chose a box. Made a facial gesture of the emotion. Moves back to the circle/or perimeter of the boxes and then passes the face to another person (much like the game "telephone"). The new person must then copy that emotion's gesture then step into a new box and make a facial gesture of that emotion. Repeat steps until all participants have had a turn.

RASA STATUES:

Have one student at a time come up to enter a box in which they must freeze in a pose that represents that rasa. Then select another student who will come up, tap the "statue" and create a new one. You can continue in the same rasa to get different versions of that emotion or switch between emotions. Can also prompt to bring statues to life.

Please Note:

Nothing is incorrect, directions given by instructor are only suggestions.
Once students have become comfortable posing, then added breath to each pose and worked with the type of breath that pose in that rasa would use.

RASA IMPROV:

The students were divided into groups of two or three and given an improv prompt: Travel along the grid lines and Only step into the box when using an associated emotion.

Two friends are discussing a new kid who moved into town.
TEEN 1: You think the new kid is terrific, and you'd like to invite them to hang out with you and your friends.
TEEN 2: You think the new kid is a jerk, and you don't want anything to do with him.

A teen meets another teen in the hallway of school
TEEN 1: You are angry because you heard the other teen was spreading rumors about you. Confront them and find out why they have been telling lies about you.
TEEN 2: You are intimidated by this other student, and you would never do anything to cross him. Do everything you can to stay on their good side.

A student needs a higher grade to attend the prom and grad night.
STUDENT: If you can convince your teacher to change your grade, you can go to grad nite and prom with your friends.
TEACHER: You are proud and you believe students are given the grades they earn. You do not believe in changing grades.
Two siblings are moving into a new house. Each sibling thinks they should get the larger room.

Two siblings need to borrow their parent's car on the same night. Discuss with their parent why they deserve to get the car.
SIBLING 1: Concert tickets
SIBLING 2: Date with someone they really like

Two campers are sitting in the middle of the woods late at night before a campfire when one of them thinks he hears an unusual noise.

CAMPER 1: You think you hear a large animal approaching, perhaps a bear or a mountain lion. You suggest a hasty retreat.
CAMPER 2: You don't hear anything. You think your friend is imagining things.

A prisoner is talking to his cellmate about his plan to escape.
PRISONER 1: You want to escape, and you want your cellmate to help you.
PRISONER 2: YOu don't want to have anything to do with your cellmate's plan to escape. You are up for parole in a few months nad you don't want to get into any trouble.

Two people run into each other on the street.
PERSON 1: You can't believe it, but it's someone you haven't seen in ten years! Find out what he's been doing all these years.
PERSON 2: This person says he knows you, but you don't recognize him. Fake it until you recognize this person.

RASA WITH MUSIC:

Option 1: Students can do a listening activity where they listen to a song and make note of each different rasa they feel was represented in the song. Discuss after what emotions they felt and explain their reasoning (lyrics, tone, instruments?) Secondly, music students can travel through different rasas as prompted by the teacher. They must play their instrument in a manner that coincides with their particular rasa they are passing through.

Option 2: We used various instruments as a group and walked through the rasa grid playing our chosen instrument using the rasa we passed through. Concentrating on other rhythms and our rasa.

RASA CHOREO:

Select 3-4 students, have each one stand in a different box. Give them a number order and allow them to create 4 counts of movement that follows that rasa. Call out the number order and have them perform in that order. Then try it with music. Can also increase the counts to 8 per person for a longer sequence. A step further is to have observing students learn the choreo and then perform it together.